

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method of improving the mechanical strength after ageing of an insulation product comprising mineral wool, comprising:

melting a glass or rock mineral composition,

fiberizing the molten glass or mineral composition into filaments to form a mineral wool,

applying a size comprising a thermosetting resin to the mineral wool which has just been formed,

simultaneously or sequentially applying a hydrophilic latex to the mineral wool, then taking up the sized mineral wool in the form of a web, and then

thermally curing the size,

wherein the hydrophilic latex comprises a dispersion or emulsion of homopolymer or copolymer prepared from one or more monomers each having at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl, carboxyl and ester, or the hydrophilic latex comprises a dispersion or emulsion of a homopolymer or copolymer and a protective colloid having hydrophilic functional groups.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the mineral wool dissolves in a physiological medium.

Claims 3-4 (Canceled)

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the homopolymer or copolymer is selected from the group consisting of vinyl polymers, vinyl

acetate homopolymers or copolymers, acrylic polymers and carboxylic acid containing polymers.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 5, wherein the homopolymer or copolymer is selected from the group consisting of a polyvinyl acetate homopolymer, a vinyl acetate/ (meth) acrylic acid or ester copolymer, a vinyl acetate/maleic ester copolymer, a vinyl acetate/olefin copolymer, a vinyl acetate/vinyl chloride copolymer, a silanized acrylonitrile/acrylic ester, and a silanized styrene/acrylic acid or ester copolymer.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the latex is an aqueous dispersion or emulsion of a homopolymer or copolymer and a protective colloid having hydrophilic functional groups.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 7, wherein the latex comprises a copolymer and a protective colloid, and the copolymer is selected from the group consisting of a silanized or non-silanized vinyl chloride/ethylene copolymer and a silanized or non-silanized vinyl chloride/vinyl laurate/ethylene terpolymer.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the latex further comprises a water-repellent agent.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the homopolymer or copolymer has a glass transition temperature T_g of less than 80°C.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the homopolymer or copolymer has a glass transition temperature T_g of greater than -5°C .

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein after said curing, the solids content of the hydrophilic latex is less than 5% by weight with respect to the weight of mineral wool.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic latex is mixed with the size before application to the mineral wool.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the hydrophilic latex is applied to the mineral wool separately from the size.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An insulation product prepared by
melting a glass or rock mineral composition,
fiberizing the molten glass or mineral composition into filaments to form a mineral
wool,
applying a size comprising a thermosetting resin to the mineral wool which has just
been formed,
simultaneously or sequentially applying a hydrophilic latex to the mineral wool, then
taking up the sized mineral wool in the form of a web, and then
thermally curing the size,
wherein the hydrophilic latex comprises a dispersion or emulsion of homopolymer or copolymer prepared from one or more monomers each having at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl, carboxyl and ester, or

the hydrophilic latex comprises a dispersion or emulsion of a homopolymer or copolymer and a protective colloid having hydrophilic functional groups.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The insulation product according to Claim 15, wherein the mineral wool comprises glass or rock wool which dissolves in a physiological medium.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The insulation product according to Claim 16, wherein the mineral wool dissolves in a saline solution simulating a physiological medium at a rate of at least 30 ng/cm^2 per hour, measured at pH 4.5, and at a rate of at least 30 ng/cm^2 per hour, measured at pH 7.5.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The insulation product according to Claim 15, wherein the insulation product has a density of at least 30 kg/m^3 .

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The insulation product of Claim 15, wherein the insulation product is a thermal and/or acoustic insulation product.

Claim 20 (Canceled)

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A sizing composition comprising a ~~thermosetting~~ phenolic resin and a hydrophilic latex,

wherein the hydrophilic latex comprises a dispersion or emulsion of homopolymer or copolymer prepared from one or more monomers each having at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl, carboxyl and ester, or

the hydrophilic latex comprises a dispersion or emulsion of a homopolymer or copolymer and a protective colloid having hydrophilic functional groups.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 9, wherein the water repellent agent is a silicone or a fluorinated compound.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 10, wherein the homopolymer or copolymer has a glass transition temperature T_g of less than 50°C.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 11, wherein the homopolymer or copolymer has a glass transition temperature T_g of greater than 0°C.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 12, wherein the solids content of the hydrophilic latex is about 0.01 to 5% by weight with respect to the weight of the mineral wool.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the thermosetting resin is a phenolic resin.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The insulation product of Claim 15, wherein the thermosetting resin is a phenolic resin.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The insulation product of Claim 18, wherein the density is at least 80 kg/m³.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): A method of improving the mechanical strength after ageing of an insulation product comprising mineral wool, comprising:

melting a glass or rock mineral composition,

fiberizing the molten glass or mineral composition into filaments to form a mineral wool,

applying a size comprising a thermosetting resin to the mineral wool which has just been formed,

simultaneously or sequentially applying a hydrophilic latex to the mineral wool, then

taking up the sized mineral wool in the form of a web, and then

thermally curing the size,

wherein the mineral wool dissolves in a physiological medium and comprises 8 to 25% by weight of at least one alkali metal oxide.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): An insulation product prepared by

melting a glass or rock mineral composition,

fiberizing the molten glass or mineral composition into filaments to form a mineral wool,

applying a size comprising a thermosetting resin to the mineral wool which has just been formed,

simultaneously or sequentially applying a hydrophilic latex to the mineral wool, then

taking up the sized mineral wool in the form of a web, and then

thermally curing the size,

wherein the mineral wool dissolves in a physiological medium and comprises 8 to 25% by weight of at least one alkali metal oxide.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 2, wherein the mineral wool comprises 8 to 25% by weight of at least one alkali metal oxide.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 7, wherein the protective colloid comprises polyvinyl alcohol or cellulose.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The insulation product of Claim 17, wherein the mineral wool dissolves in a saline solution simulating a physiological medium at a rate of at least 40 ng/cm² per hour, measured at pH 4.5, and at a rate of at least 40 ng/cm² per hour, measured at pH 7.5.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The insulation product of Claim 17, wherein the mineral wool dissolves in a saline solution simulating a physiological medium at a rate of at least 50 ng/cm² per hour, measured at pH 4.5, and at a rate of at least 50 ng/cm² per hour, measured at pH 7.5.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): The insulation product according to Claim 15, wherein the insulation product has a density of at least 50 kg/m³.